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by considering that nothing could be more natural or excusable in one who had experienced such wonderful changes and almost miraculous escapes in defending the cause of religion, while he referred every thing to an overruling Providence, and did not allow himself to doubt of a special guidance and protection. If Walter Scott had designed a representation of the times of the Huguenots to mate that of the Covenanters which he drew in "Old Mortality," he would not have ventured on inventions so bold as are some incidents in this book ; and he could not have reached any thing approaching to the vivid picture of simple-hearted faith and real devotion, which this true history displays.

4. — *A New Dictionary of the English Language*. By CHARLES RICHARDSON. In Two Volumes, 4to. London : William Pickering. New York : William Jackson. 1838.

IN a previous number of our Journal, we gave an account of the plan of this work and of its general execution.* From that account it will be readily perceived, that the value of the Dictionary does not consist in its adaptation to popular use. As a dictionary of reference for definitions and illustrations of words, in the existing state of the language, it is inconvenient, and therefore cannot obtain extensive use for that purpose. But it is a curious philological storehouse ; overloaded, indeed, with the antiquities of the English tongue, yet deserving a place in all public libraries, and in the private libraries of critical English readers. We hope the publishers will be amply rewarded for giving us access to this elaborate production, which throws much light on the origin and progressive changes of our copious English vocabulary. The work is now completed upon the plan which we explained sufficiently in our former notice of it, and we do not think it important to add any thing to what has been already said.

The Preliminary Essay and Preface appear in the closing number of the Dictionary, and afford ample matter for those who love to revel in etymological subtilties. Like other lexicographers and grammarians, Mr. Richardson has a theory concerning language, which he explains and defends ; a theory which is ingenious, if not in some respects original. It is founded on the *thesis*, that organic sounds derive their meaning from natural causes. We shall say nothing concerning his illustrations of this, drawn from words of the same meaning in

* See *North American Review*, Vol. XLV. pp. 186, *et seq.*

different languages, which really show nothing about the origin of organic sounds, as connected with their meaning ; but which, when stripped of their disguises, show only the derivation of these words, in successive languages, from a language preceding. His theory, summed up in a few words, is this ; namely, that all men have the same organs of speech and of hearing ; that organic sounds are intelligible sounds with distinct meanings ; that written signs denote these intelligible sounds, each sign corresponding to an organic sound ; and consequently that each letter, in its origin, is the sign of a distinct meaning, and in fact of a word previously familiar in speech.

Starting from these first principles, he finds or imagines the initial and final letters of words to be significant, and when he cannot account for letters interposed (appearing not to be significant), he ascribes the interposition to accident or corruption. But his illustrations appear to be, for the most part, forced and fanciful, and are so generally either unsatisfactory, or unintelligible, that we leave them for the investigation of more profound miners in the depths of philology.

Mr. Richardson is a generous critic. He speaks in just terms of praise of the labors of Johnson, from whose Dictionary, he says, may be chosen "interpretations expressed with most admirable precision and completeness" ; and he concurs in the opinion of Nares, that "Johnson's authority has nearly fixed the external form of our language, and that from its decisions few appeals have been made." He is just too, no less than generous. Speaking of his obligations to Horne Tooke (his *magnus Apollo* among grammarians), he says, "I have done to him that scrupulous justice which I have done to all, to whose labors I have been indebted. Of not one borrowed feather, unacknowledged, would I willingly permit myself the use." To that distinguished political philologist he is, indeed, more than just. He speaks of him "as the philosophical grammarian who alone is entitled to the name of a *discoverer*." We, too, acknowledge our obligations to this discoverer, so called, but not on the ground upon which Mr. Richardson founds his preëminent claims ; namely, that "he has demonstrated that a word has one meaning and one only." This seeming paradox, when explained, amounts to nothing more than what has been perceived and affirmed by other philosophers and grammarians, ancient and modern. Scaliger affirms, that no word has more than one primary and peculiar signification. "I doubt not," says Locke, "but if we could trace them to their sources, we should find, in all languages, the names that stand for things that fall not under our senses, to have had their first origin from sensible objects." That such

names are the origin of language, and hence that language, with all the refinements that have attended its growth, has sprung from nouns, may readily be admitted.

Sir James Mackintosh says, that "Horne Tooke's is a wonderful work ; but the great merit is the original thought." The original thought attributed to that "wonderful work" does not belong to it. The real merit and peculiarity of the work, consist in the illustration of an old theory by a process of induction, and forcing every thing to bend to that theory. Every word, in its origin, says the author, is a noun. The particles are abbreviations ; the verb is a noun and "something more" ; but here he leaves the matter, and tells us not what that something more is. Though he rejects the common nomenclatures, both of practical and philosophical grammarians, he is obliged to resort to classification, and to speak of *abbreviations* instead of particles, and of another class of words not only as adjectives, but as *potential passive* and *potential active adjectives*.

But we must return from our wanderings to Mr. Richardson, and conclude with the expression of our conviction, that whoever examines his Dictionary, even to the small extent that we have done, will find it entitled to all the praise we have bestowed upon it.

5. — *A Greek Grammar for the Use of Learners*, by E. A. SOPHOCLES, A. M. Hartford : H. Huntington, Jr. New York : F. J. Huntington & Co. 1838.

THIS is a very compact, thorough, and logical grammar ; wanting neither in method, proportion of parts, nor copiousness of detail. The author is a modern Greek, who has lived a number of years in this country, has been a successful teacher, and now resides at New Haven. So far as we can see, he possesses a complete mastery of English, which is especially shown in his translations of examples under his rules of syntax. In these there is a raciness and clearness of expression, which give proof, that both the English and ancient Greek are clothed with their full power and life in his mind. Mr. Sophocles is quite unlike many of his countrymen in his appreciation of the labors of modern European scholars. He does full justice to Matthiæ and Buttmann ; and may, in truth, we think, be said to have written his Grammar, with a due knowledge of the state of Greek learning at the present day. His candor and love of